

# Michigan Celebrates AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH with Literature

## WEEK 2

**February 2021**

sun	mon	tue	wed	thu	fri	sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

The Michigan Department of Education and the Library of Michigan are excited to showcase African American authors and their literary works each week during the month of February in celebration of African American History Month. Seven authors and their works are featured and were selected from nominations submitted by educators for use by educators.

Student literacy increases powerfully as students see themselves (mirrors) and others (windows) portrayed accurately in their reading as presented in the work of Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop. By raising the consciousness about great African American authors from educators to educators and by lifting up African American authors and their works, we seek to create conditions for greater engagement with literature among Michigan students.

February

**08**

### **Ghost Boys**

Jewell Parker Rhodes

**Age:** 9-12 years

**Genre:** Fiction

**ISBN:** 978-0316262262

**Awards:** ALA Notable Children's Books - Older Readers Category: 2019

Walter Dean Myers Awards for Outstanding Children's Literature

YALSA Quick Picks for Reluctant Young Adult Readers: 2019

**Nominator:** Jolie Valentine

**School/District/Institution:** Field Elementary School/Plymouth-Canton Community Schools

#### **Incorporation in Curriculum:**

"Students think about and wrestle with issues like police shootings and race relations, and they talk to each other about these issues. This story allows students to explore the topics in a safe way, in the context of a 'ghost' story that immediately grabs the attention of middle-grade readers. This book tackles one of the toughest debates of our age in a nuanced and page-turning way for our students."

February

09

### All American Boys

Jason Reynolds

**Age:** Teen

**Genre:** Fiction

**ISBN:** 978-1481463348

**Awards:** Coretta Scott King  
Author Honor book: 2016

School Library Journal Best  
Books: 2015

Thumbs Up! Award (Michigan)

**Nominator:** Genevieve Minor

**School/District/Institution:** Traverse City West  
Senior High School/Traverse City Area Public  
Schools

**Incorporation in Curriculum:**

"I use this book for a book talk with my students and when I visit classes as students are selecting a free choice book. My school is predominately White and their experience with other races and cultures is limited. This book helps students understand multiple perspectives, explore the complexity of racial relations with police and the influence of social media, and build empathy."

February

10

### Hair Like Mine

LaTashia Perry

**Age:** 0-8 years

**Genre:** Fiction

**ISBN:** 978-0986237973

**Nominator:** Starletta Rett-Henry

**School/District/Institution:** Brendel  
Elementary/Grand Blanc Schools

**Incorporation in Curriculum:**

"I have used this text to encourage rhyming and story elements. I have also utilized this text to empower students through a series of self-identity texts."

February

11

### The Piano Lesson

August Wilson

**Age:** Teen

**Genre:** Drama

**ISBN:** 978-1442495012

**Awards:** 1990 Drama Desk  
Award for Outstanding Play  
1990 New York Drama Critics'  
Circle Award for Best Play  
1990 Pulitzer Prize for Drama

**Nominator:** Gregory Dykhouse

**School/District/Institution:** Black River Public  
School/Black River Elementary School

**Incorporation in Curriculum:**

"Wilson's body of dramatic works depicts life for African Americans during various decades of the early twentieth century. This work is set in Pittsburgh during the 1930s. Brother and sister argue over what to do with a piano that has been in the family for many generations, since slavery, which I use to teach students the larger challenge of understanding our past."

February

12

**IA: Initiate**

John Darryl Winston

**Age:** Teen

**Genre:** Fiction

**ISBN:** 978-1946006363

**Nominator:** Glynis Flowers

**School/District/Institution:** Golightly Education Center/Detroit Public Schools Community District

**Incorporation in Curriculum:**

"The students read this book as a means to build self-discipline and self-esteem in the pre-teen age."

February

13

**Counting Descent**

Clint Smith

**Age:** Teen

**Genre:** Poetry

**ISBN:** 978-1938912658

**Awards:** Winner, 2017 Black Caucus of the American Library Association Literary Award

Finalist, 2017 NAACP Image Awards

'One Book One New Orleans' 2017 Book Selection

**Nominator:** Annette Christiansen

**School/District/Institution:** Stevenson High School/Utica Community Schools

**Incorporation in Curriculum:**

"Clint Smith is one of the 'Living Poets' my Advanced Placement English Literature and Composition students study. He has an excellent voice and speaks to issues that face us as humans. He constantly wins our 'March Madness' bracket competition that pits poems against each other and the 'best' as selected by students advances."

February

14

**Bud, Not Buddy**

Christopher Paul Curtis

**Age:** 9-12 years

**Genre:** Fiction

**ISBN:** 978-0439402002

**Awards:** ALA Notable Children's Books: 2000

Coretta Scott King Award (Authors): 2000

Newbery Medal Winner: 2000

**Nominator:** Angela Moore

**School/District/Institution:** Commonwealth Community Development Academy PSA

**Incorporation in Curriculum:**

"*Bud, Not Buddy* helped to integrate reading with social studies and economics to study The Great Depression Era. It inspired a love for reading."

*Thank you to all the Michigan Pre-K-12 educators who nominated African American authors and their literary works as well as how they used them with their students. Look for our next set of titles on Friday, February 12, 2021.*